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FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION REFORM LEGISLATION: IMPLEMENTING THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997

REVEREND JOHN J. COUGHLIN*


Prior to joining the St. John's Law faculty, Rev. Coughlin served as: a Professor of Canon Law and Spiritual Director at St. Joseph's Seminary (1994-98); Episcopal Vicar for Legal and Canonical Aspects of Health Care of the Archdiocese of New York (1997-98); Judge for the NYS Catholic Interdiocesan Appeals Tribunal (1995-Present); General Legal and Canonical Counsel to the Franciscan Friars of the Holy Name Province (1993-96); General Counsel to the University and Assistant Professor in the School of Business at St. Bonaventure University (1992-93); Law Clerk to the Honorable Frank X. Altimari of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (1989-90); Associate Pastor at St. Stephen of Hungary Church (1982-83); and History Teacher at Bishop Timon High School.
I want to begin our proceedings now that everyone has arrived. This is the third and final panel of the afternoon in our excellent conference on children and human rights. We will now discuss the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997,¹ also known as ASFA. We have a distinguished group of panelists and because we want to get right to it, the panelists have been kind enough to dispense with the lengthy biographical introductions. If you are interested in those, and they are interesting, they're available in the booklet that was given out.

Our panelists, however, I think will not disappoint you. Our first speaker is Bernadine Dohrn, the director of the Children and Family Justice Center at Northwestern School of Law, and we are very happy to welcome her here today to the St. John's University School of Law.